



Baylor University

DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE

2020-21 *Annual Report*



The 2020-2021 Academic year will go down in our lifetimes as one of the most challenging years in Higher Education as we navigated the Covid-19 global pandemic, economic uncertainty, social unrest marked by racial strife, and a divisive national presidential election. Through it all, we stayed focused on our goal of protecting the health and well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and community while still providing the best Baylor experience possible. The obstacles and opportunities we faced this past year were generally not unique to Baylor, as we, like other institutions, navigated higher education in a global pandemic. Yet, our unique mission as a community of scholarship and faith distinctly shaped how we went about educating, forming, and serving our new and returning Baylor Bears during these extraordinary times.

In the Division of Student Life, we established five priorities, formulated specifically for this year. While we diverted from some of our previously stated areas of focus, these five priorities became our shared aspiration to not only help our students survive the pandemic, but to help them thrive academically, spiritually and socially as we worked through it. We also felt responsibility to steward our relationships with the broader campus and surrounding Waco community by mitigating the spread of Covid-19.

STUDENT LIFE GOAL FOR 2020-2021:

Protect the health and well-being of our students, faculty, staff and community while providing the best Baylor experience possible during a global pandemic.

STUDENT LIFE PRIORITIES FOR 2020-2021:

- 1) KEEPING THE HEALTHY HEALTHY
- 2) CARING FOR THE SICK
- 3) STRENGTHENING THE EXPERIENCE OF NEW BAYLOR BEARS
- 4) ENGAGING IN RACIAL HEALING AND UNDERSTANDING
- 5) ADDRESSING OPERATIONAL AND STAFFING GAPS

KEEPING THE HEALTHY HEALTHY

Even before the semester started, members of Student Life were hard at work to ensure our students would be as safe as possible upon their return. The Health Services Department designed and secured a new location for a Respiratory Clinic at the North Village Community Center, a safe location where any student, faculty or staff member experiencing respiratory symptoms could go for testing. This alternate location to our Health Center in the McLane Student Life Center (SLC) was a strategic step to minimize exposure to others in the SLC, both those who might be visiting the Health Center and those using the recreation areas of the SLC.

Move2BU has become an official welcome to Baylor for our new students and their families. Volunteers donning masks greeted our new students to carry their belongings into the residence halls in not just the standard two move-in time periods, but six sessions of move-in as we de-densified the experience to keep everyone safe and healthy at the pivotal start to the semester. **More than 1,500 volunteers jumped in to make this warm welcome a great success.**

New students (3,731) started the fall semester with a largely virtual Welcome Week aside from an outdoor and socially distanced Milk and Cookies event on Fountain mall. **We began our academic year with approximately 93% occupancy in our Residence Halls, the highest occupancy rate in our state.** Campus Living & Learning implemented many new policies and protocols to help keep on-campus students safe and we were pleased to maintain a high level of occupancy through the year, giving students a vibrant living experience even as they navigated masks and social distancing in their lobbies, lounges, laundry rooms and community bath spaces.

While many students studied on campus in socially distant classrooms and residence halls, approximately 1,400 students lived at home and studied all-online. In either case, engaging with all students remained a constant priority for our division and **we utilized technology to bridge the gap created by limited in-person interactions.**

For our students who chose to live on campus and be in-person for their instruction, the residence hall environments adapted significantly. We put interim policies in place to limit visitors and also to encourage adherence to health protective practices. Our Resi-

dence Hall Directors, Community Leaders and Resident Chaplains provided constant support for students who were navigating living in community during a global pandemic. Again, the use of technology and platforms like StarRez, Navigate and Maxient became critical in our outreach efforts to students while also keeping our staff safe from large amounts of in-person interaction.

While by and large the campus community stepped up in joining together in proactive behaviors and precautions to mitigate the spread of Covid-19, the pandemic did create unique challenges related to enforcing compliance with new and interim Covid-19 policies, efforts, and considerations. Student Conduct Administration served an important role in the past academic year ensuring student accountability with Covid-19 prevention efforts. In comparison to the previous year, Judicial Affairs saw a 71% increase in cases this year. Some of those cases were minor things, such as students who consistently had trouble remembering to wear a mask, but others were more substantive, and Judicial Affairs efforts were important in ensuring both fairness to students but also campus accountability. The rapid move to virtual learning spaces also created some new challenges, and the Office of Academic Integrity also saw a 37% increase in cases.

Perhaps one of the most significant pivots made within our efforts to keep the healthy healthy was our transformation of the Chapel experience for first year students. It was not a safe option, nor feasible, to have groups of 1000-plus students assemble in Waco Hall for three sessions of Chapel as had been our tradition. Not only would social distancing not have been possible with that many students, but Waco Hall had been repurposed to be a classroom for daily seminar use. **With immense creativity, intentional design and thoughtful implementation, the Chapel experience was transformed for our entering class.** Aligning to the curriculum map of Christian Scriptures, our staff offered a virtual Chapel experience by creating 58 films that took students through the Biblical narrative and invited them into a deeper understanding and more practical application of Scripture. Approximately 4400 students participated in virtual chapel, and at the close of most Chapel videos students would be asked to take a short quiz to affirm their knowledge of information covered in that Chapel program. Of those students, 76% said they had a positive experience that was spiritually helpful.



“
Bear Aid was helpful and accommodating during this process and I appreciated the help of Megan Becker and Dr. Burleson.
”

—Megan Mosquera
Baylor University Student





Speaking of chapel, 92 student athletes took part in one of our chapel experiences coordinated by our Sports Ministry staff: 45 in “Cross Training,” a semester long chapel specifically for student athletes and 47 in “Ultimate Training Camp,” a one week virtual camp put on by Athletes in Action. Another effort to serve the spiritual needs of our student athletes was “iDisciple,” an eight week personal ministry skills bootcamp which 26 student athletes participated in. Volunteer team chaplains also actively engaged in building communities of discipleship on 12 of our 17 athletic teams, with dozens of student athletes growing spiritually as a result of their efforts either in small groups or one on one.

In addition to the on-campus living environment, campus events were an important part of our effort to keep the healthy healthy. **We knew students would need to have opportunities to engage socially in safe and vibrant environments, places where we could ensure health protective practices would be utilized and we could allow students to participate in time-honored, Baylor traditions.** Running the Baylor Line became a focal point for our first-year students and approximately 500 new students cued to Run the Line at each home game. The numbers were smaller, but the experience no less vibrant and important as these students symbolically represented their entire class with each game’s Running of the Line.

While football games sometimes had to be postponed or cancelled due to Covid pauses, our Department of Student Activities ensured students would still experience Baylor and Waco through events like Staycation where local Waco locations were on full display and our “Sign the Line” event for first year and Senior students who had the opportunity to sign a freshly painted yellow line in McLane Stadium, symbolically marking their place in history as part of this historic class and season at the institution. Many students also had their photos taken with President Livingstone and the First Gent as they enjoyed standing at the center of the field in McLane Stadium.

Homecoming had many adapted elements to provide a safe, socially distanced in-person experience for students. For example, the Pigskin Revue that captured our top Sing acts from 2020, shown on the big screen at McLane Stadium or the food truck festival where students could eat and socialize prior to Pigskin. We also created a partnership with downtown Waco businesses who painted Baylor murals in their windows to celebrate the weekend and even a few floats on display to keep the spirit of the parade alive. **More than 1,500 people were able to attend Homecoming festivities in-person, but more than 40,000 participated when**

you include the 21,500 views for the Homecoming Pep Rally and an additional 17,500 views for Mass Meeting.

Due to the amended academic calendar, almost all students left campus before the traditional time period for celebrating Christmas on 5th. However, the show would go on with the biggest Christmas tree in known Baylor history and student leaders from KOT working to make the event a smashing success. Christmas on 5th related virtual streams received more than 30,000 views. Students, families, faculty, staff and alumni were all delighted by a virtual performance that celebrated in style, and, most importantly, focused on our common bond of celebrating the birth of Christ.

The spring semester brought more opportunities for gathering, celebrating and staying healthy as we stepped up our testing to keep the virus at bay. In February, Sundown Sessions resumed each weekend in the Bill Daniel Student Center and we also continued offering grab and go Dr Pepper floats each Tuesday during the favorite hour of the week—all practicing safe social distancing. Both of these traditions kept students connected to Baylor and connected to each other. Despite the pandemic, the SUB still had more than one million visitors this past year.

February also brought “Snowvid” or “Snowpocalypse” to Waco and the central Texas region. **The days of ice, cold, and snow may have dampened our streets and buildings, but not the spirit of our resilient students who made the best of a challenging week.** So many students jumped in to help each other with warm homes and WIFI in addition to the support the University offered through opening warming shelters on campus and providing food to students in need. Student Life maintained some of the most active warming shelters, opening up the Student Life Center and Student Union Building as a safe places for students during the cold.

In March, our attention turned once again to keeping students healthy as they enthusiastically supported our Men’s and Women’s Basketball teams during the Big XII and NCAA tournaments. The celebrations grew larger and more enthusiastic with each successive win.

With the men’s team advancing to the Final 4, we hosted watch parties and even took a trip of 50 students to Indianapolis to see the historic games in-person. **The men’s basketball season culminated in a historic national championship win cheered on by several thousand students in McLane Stadium.**

In late March and all through April, our testing numbers indicated that the virus was under control and we were able to host a number of in-person events on campus. Just to name a few, we celebrated Gateway to India (hosted by ISSA), Stompfest, Fiesta and Dia Week. In each event, we saw student leaders creatively design programs that stayed true to their mission and purpose, while also adapting to keep performers and attendees safe and healthy as we headed to the end of the semester and final exams.

Other areas of the Division of Student Life also continued to offer modified programming throughout the academic year. Notably, we provided the following opportunities: Weekend programs for new students in the spring semester; the Baylor Family Groups initiative, that connected new students to Baylor and to each other; our Living Learning Communities like LEAD and Baylor and Beyond; and a reformulated Intramurals program that capitalized on individual and small team sports that could be played with social distancing. Over 4,420 students participated in Intramurals across both semesters. Finally, in the spring semester, we offered Fit for All at no charge to students and saw 1,660 students participate. This opportunity to join in group fitness classes allowed our students to stay physically fit and well, perhaps one of the best ways they staved off Covid-19.

In addition to the aforementioned events, Student Life staff played a key role in our Health Management Team,

participating in daily meetings where policies, protocols and event considerations were reviewed in close detail.

Additionally, our team members were involved in the design of our weekly testing schedule, communications and compliance measures. **Over 201,500 tests were completed at Baylor last year** in combination of those experiencing virus-related symptoms as well as surveillance tests administered throughout the year, all designed to keep our community healthy and safe. In an effort to encourage testing, we implemented an incentive program for students in both the fall and spring semesters, with weekly coupons to local businesses and “grand prizes” for assistance with books, tuition and other school expenses. We engaged in regular “thank you” efforts to students for participating in weekly testing, all toward our effort to keep the campus and the broader Waco community safe and healthy.

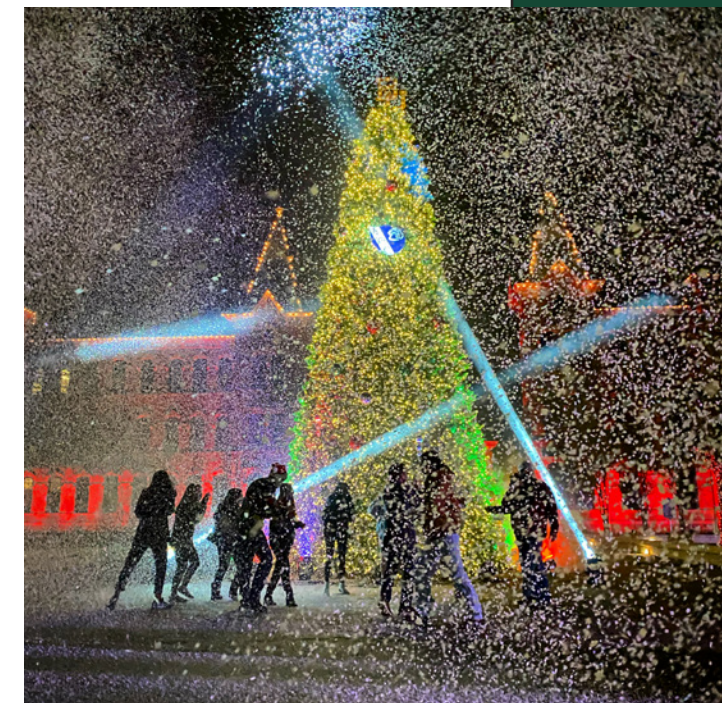
Perhaps one of the most direct ways we worked to keep the healthy healthy, was through our efforts to promote and disseminate the Covid-19 Vaccine. Shortly after FDA provided emergency authorization of Covid-19 vaccines, the Health Center applied and was approved as a vaccine provider. Throughout the year, and particularly in the spring semester, Health Services administered doses of the Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines. **By summer of 2021 Health Services had administered 8,000 Covid-19 vaccine doses.**

“

Baylor truly helped me make it through this time. Thank you.

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—Loren Abernathy
Baylor University Student



CARING FOR THE SICK

Our plan for caring for the sick started first with prevention. We supported the institution’s approach to following CDC guidance which at the start of the academic year included: frequent hand washing, social distancing of six feet or more, frequent testing, staying home when sick and wearing face coverings. All of these health protective practices were implemented in creative ways here at Baylor, from de-densifying our classrooms, dining areas and residence halls to providing each student with a Family First kit upon their arrival to campus. These kits included a thermometer, refillable water bottle, two face coverings, coupons to local businesses and reminder cards with an overview of the health protective practices. **Approximately 21,000 kits were assembled by volunteers and distributed in the first week of the semester.** The Missions and Public Life team was on point for coordinating these efforts as they pivoted to making the campus their mission field for the span of the academic year.

Our prevention efforts also included pre-arrival testing for all students, faculty and staff in both the fall and spring semesters. We partnered with Everlywell, a medical test company, to deliver test kits to individuals’ homes and then had the kits sent back via postal mail. While this partnership yielded some challenges, it was a streamlined way to test the entire campus population prior to their return to campus. At or prior to move-in, we collected test results from all of our residential students and this became an effective means of mitigating the spread of the virus on campus, particularly asymptomatic spread, which was a significant concern.

In the fall 2020 semester, our testing approach included surveillance testing where approximately 10% of students, faculty and staff were randomly selected for testing each week. These randomized tests helped us identify potential “pockets” of spread across campus which then allowed us to do surge testing, a strategy that focused on isolating and containing the virus when it was prevalent within a residence hall or specific group of students. At one point, we implemented a “Reside in Place” for two floors of Martin Hall due to a spike in positive cases. These strategies collectively allowed us to remain open and operational when many campuses around the country found it necessary to go fully on-line or pivoted to on-line after a short window of conducting in-person classes.

The detailed work required to implement these mitigation strategies was challenging and required strong cross-institutional support as well as the ability to adapt and be innovative. For example, when a student tested positive for Covid-19, CDC guidance stipulated contact tracing to allow those who had been within six feet for more than 15 minutes to know they had been a direct contact and should quarantine to prevent further spread of the virus. These efforts were coordinated through our Environmental Health and Safety team, but many in Student Life and other departments across campus assisted with these outreach calls or helped to coordinate the trained student employees who were working in these roles. **In all, more than 10,500 contacts were made across the academic year (between calls to those who tested positive, calls to notify close contacts, and follow up calls to check up on those who tested positive).** Once a student was identified as a direct contact and subsequently reached, they would be placed in quarantine and offered periodic check-ins and recommendations for follow up testing. Also, if these students lived on campus they would be supported by BearAid, our wrap-around care program for students in isolation and/or quarantine. BearAid consisted of a coordinated care effort out of our Missions and Public Life (MPL) and Campus Living and Learning Departments (CL&L). CL&L managed the rooms set aside to house students in isolation and coordinated student placement in these spaces. MPL coordinated meal deliveries and the critical liaison relationship with Aramark. Finally, we also offered mail and package delivery and that was coordinated by our Academy for Leadership Development staff. More than 4,000 students were in quarantine across the year and 1,115 were isolated after having tested positive for Covid-19. Some of our isolating and quarantining students opted to convalesce at home, but many students stayed right on campus to work through these windows of time.

While the aforementioned description sounds fairly straightforward, **the logistics, coordination and necessary communication across departments and individuals was a tremendous feat to be accomplished.** Expanding our support for students in these situations also involved liaison connections with faculty and family members who were concerned for their students and coordination of transportation to and from isolation spaces. Once again, we were fortunate to have the

necessary resources and creative solutions to provide a high level of care to our students who were ill from or exposed to the virus.

Shortly into the fall semester, we recognized that having students in quarantine for 14 days in a small, shared residence hall space was going to present challenges for their mental and physical health. We creatively developed a solution to address this need, Get Outside (GO) Time. For approximately 2 hours each Monday-Saturday, we encouraged quarantining students to be outside in a supervised environment to get fresh air and sunshine. Students could choose to participate (while masked) in outdoor recreation activities coordinated by our Campus Recreation and Wellness departments. They could also just relax outside in order to alleviate the sense of isolation and confinement to their rooms. Unfortunately, we were not able to provide this same access to students in isolation as the risk was too high for possible further transmission of the virus. Our participation rates in GO Time were relatively low, but we believe having this as an option gave students a sense of flexibility that was needed to mitigate the stress of quarantine.

“*Something I really appreciated that made me feel like I was still a part of Baylor even while I was away was the sending of the Family First kits that came in September. It was very thoughtful and I was able to wear my Baylor mask even while at home which was really special!*”

—**Baylor University
Online Student**



STRENGTHENING THE EXPERIENCE OF NEW BAYLOR BEARS



Months prior to the start of the fall semester, we rebuilt almost all of our programs from the ground up to provide as close to our historical levels of personal connection with students as possible, but through safe channels and opportunities, knowing that our ability to interact in person would be significantly limited due to the virus. This included a completely new “Virtual” Orientation (serving 3,600+ students) and Line Camp (serving 2,500+ students) programs delivered entirely through video and live chat functionality. Move2BU operated differently with the addition of “unassisted” move-in options beginning the Sunday before traditional move-in. We also did a “check-in” at the Ferrell Center where students showed evidence of a clearance certificate, indicating that they had either tested negative through the Everlywell home test kit or were convalescing from Covid within the last 90 days.

Welcome Week and Welcome Weekend activities were modified to provide a combination of safe, socially distanced in-person activity as well as virtual activities. Traditional Welcome Week groups functioned in a virtual space, still affording students the chance to meet other students on their floors. We intentionally designed Welcome Week groups by residence to minimize cross-campus interactions amongst small groups of students who might be gathering for limited in-person interaction. Every aspect of our work to engage with our new Baylor Bears had to be filtered through the lens of mitigating the spread of the virus.

In a new initiative, specifically designed for this past fall, 350 Baylor Family Groups were established to provide consistent outreach to new students and connect with them weekly. Thousands of personal messages were sent to students from student leaders and limited in-person interactions were made as available as possible. This small group, “family experience,” was meant to provide opportunities for forging relationships and also connecting students facing challenges with resources to help meet their needs.

What’s New BU emails provided students with a weekly list of virtual and in-person opportunities to build community and this past year we created a new

version of these weekly emails that was mailed to on-line-only students, a mix of new and returning students who had opted to study at home for the fall and some for the spring. These emails included virtual opportunities for the online-only population of Baylor Bears around the world to engage and connect.

College isn’t college without food. This year provided no end of opportunities to show we are at our best when breaking bread, whether together or distanced. **We fed more than 6,000 students during the annual Thanksgiving Dinner (all in a grab-n-go format).** Dr Pepper Hour also moved to grab-n-go this year and continued to connect students to this important historical tradition. A regular rotation of food trucks were present on campus to provide even greater variety and accessibility to food because our dining halls and retail dining locations were de-densified to accommodate for social distancing. Even our quarantine and isolation students marked their experiences by the daily food deliveries from our BearAid team. **In all, 17,352 meals were delivered to students in isolation or quarantine as a result of Covid-19.**

Many of our campus traditions draw particular interest from our residential population which is largely made up of first year students, usually more than 65% of our residential students are freshmen. In the ongoing spirit of reaching these new Baylor Bears, our programming around traditions was of critical importance. While many campuses around the country cancelled traditional events like Homecoming, Baylor pressed on with purpose and diligence to keep these traditions alive while adhering to health protective strategies. Activities like the Bearathon were moved to “where you are,” virtual events. Baylor Fraternity and Sorority Life moved all of their recruitment and activities to online, virtual platforms this year. Pigskin Revue was produced in a video format and premiered for students in an outdoor, safe experience at McLane Stadium during the most unique Homecoming celebration in our history. Christmas on 5th Street was a live broadcast from Burleson Quadrangle to the entire Baylor Family. The annual Baylor Late Night event presented more than 200 student organizations in a virtual experience to thousands of students. **And despite all the challenges, more than 4,300 Student Organization Events and**

Meetings were held this year with 8,447 members involved in student organizations.

In some senses, the class of #BU24 may end up being one of the closest-knit classes in Baylor history. They have lived and struggled beside each other and together through one of the most disruptive societal events in a century. Providing opportunities for students to build connections with their classmates was a constant goal for the year.

“Coming to Baylor as a transfer student was admittedly a little daunting, but the programs this university provided me, helped me to feel at home here and begin to further my academic journey. Specifically, Baylor Line Camp Home Edition, as well as Baylor Family Groups created an outlet for me to make some of my first friends at Baylor and to begin to establish the community that I now know and love. Additionally, the Transfer Year Experience, that Baylor facilitates at University Parks LLC, helped me to meet fellow transfer students, including my roommates who are now two of my closest friends.”

—**Madison Allen**
Baylor University
Leader, Orientation &
Baylor Line Camp



ENGAGING IN RACIAL HEALING AND UNDERSTANDING

Across the academic year and amidst national and local social unrest, as well as a contentious presidential election, **the Division of Student Life focused on helping students process what they were experiencing and find ways to work through the pain and confusion to help foster a more fair and equitable campus environment.** It is within this context that the Division of Student Life developed a strategic plan for building a more caring, Christian community in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) and did so incorporating voices of students across various ethnic groups as well as staff at all levels of the organization. Through pursuing the priority of Engaging in Racial Healing and Understanding the division moved toward rebuilding and reimagining relationships with all students from across the University, particularly our students of color and students who have historically felt marginalized or less included. One of our commitments within the Caring Christian Community Plan is to strengthen our ability to serve, support, and listen to all students, faculty, staff, and community partners in a fair and just manner regardless of differences. During the year, we also contributed in significant ways to the Commission on Historic Campus Representations and its subsequent recommendations as well as we are assisting with the implementation of those recommendations by serving on the Campus Experience Committee.

In tandem to the Division's work in developing the Caring Christian Community strategic plan, the Department of Multicultural Affairs continued to work with students through virtual and safe socially distanced interactions to nurture a shared voice and sense of belonging. We initiated reflection and listening conversation sessions, promoted academic success, and sought ways for students to express their perspectives on current social events by presenting virtual platforms for the celebration of Heritage Months, including Women's History Month. A new element of the Heritage Month Celebrations was the addition of "Our Voices", a faculty panel series. These panels, created in partnership between Student Life, the Academy of Teaching and Learning (ATL) and Student Success, discussed best practices as well as experiences in the classroom that may deter successful teaching and learning for students of color. This Our Voice series encompassed working with Latinx, Asian, Black, and female students.

As students continued to seek shared voice and safe spaces to bond and grow as a community, they engaged with groups like: MISTER (Males Inspiring Success Through Education and Relationships), who provided a place for minority males to explore issues impacting their lives; My Sister My Self, for Black Women and Women of Color to have in-depth discussions encouraging community; and Latinas Unidas, a community for women of all Latin American backgrounds and Women of Color to find a sense of belonging. **Even in a virtual format, these groups allowed student participants to focus on empowerment, fellowship, and mentorship through supportive relationships and monthly meetings averaged between 10-30 people per group.** This was particularly important across the year as there were many instances of social unrest and division across the nation.

Across campus, students were encouraged to celebrate their personal heritage and embrace the cultures of others by engaging in events such as Mosaic Mixer, a traditional Welcome Week program hosted by the Department of Multicultural Affairs. This year, that program had to be offered in a solely virtual format, but student organizations were still immensely creative in the ways in which they introduced their peers to culture and belonging at Baylor. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about Baylor's 40+ multicultural organizations in the realms of academic interest, interpersonal and professional development, Greek life, religious engagement, special interest groups' activities and specific student associations. Better Together is one of these associations. This on-campus interfaith group brings students of all backgrounds together and is part of the Interfaith Youth Core's national network of people who are passionate about interfaith dialogue, working together to solve global issues, and becoming better leaders and citizens. Meeting virtually during the pandemic, the group presented a podcast based on their study of Rhonda V. Magee's book, *The Inner Work of Racial Justice: Healing Ourselves and Transforming Our Communities Through Mindfulness*. The podcast session offered students the opportunity to reflect on their own culture, community, and sense of "self" and to learn about others in the hopes that they would share with one another and develop a deep understanding and appreciation for each other.

As we brought the academic year to a close, we celebrated our graduates with a special virtual Kente Ceremony. This annual event recognizes, emphasizes, and celebrates the educational achievement of all graduates, while sharing with the Baylor family a heritage rich in tradition and deeply rooted in Christianity. It's an occasion for graduates to rejoice in their Christian faith, to remember those who came before - students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds - who have made their mark at Baylor University, and to accept the challenge and responsibility to continue to strive for excellence in their personal, academic, and professional careers as they take their experiences gained at Baylor out into the world. More than 100 Kente Stoles were presented to graduates of all cultural backgrounds.

Creating a climate where all students, staff, faculty, and community partners feel welcomed, respected, and valued with a sense of belonging is paramount in achieving racial healing and understanding amongst our Baylor family. Across the University, departments and organizations worked to cultivate a culture of understanding, belonging, and inclusion. In October, Student Life presented *This Matters*, which featured a previously-recorded step show by Baylor's chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., a performance that was originally choreographed for the *After Dark* variety



“ The work done by Student Life and Multicultural Affairs has held tremendous importance to the advancement of our campus, even more so during such a difficult year & school year. These departments stood beside us through marches and protests, prayer vigils and demonstrations; they answered our numerous calls to action. There is still much to be done, but I can truly say that their support speaks volumes and has been greatly appreciated. ”

—**Forche Bridges**
Baylor University | 2022
Film & Digital Media Major



“My name is Christine Phan and I serve as the current Coalition of Asian Student Intern under the Department of Multicultural Affairs. I believe that Student Life and Multicultural Affairs truly cares for the passions and concerns of Baylor students, especially when it involves expressive activity. This semester and past year, the Asian and Asian American community has suffered tremendous hardship because of COVID-19. Multicultural Affairs and Student Activities equipped me with many resources to mobilize my community after the mass shooting in Atlanta that took the lives of six Asian women in March. Two days later, we were able to host an AAPI Vigil to create a safe space for our students to grieve, pray, and heal as a community. After the physical assault of an Asian student near campus, my community was hurt and full of fear. We worked with Student Life to host an AAPI Demonstration with over 175 Baylor faculty, staff, and students in attendance as a response to the assault and as an opportunity to express our collective concerns and expectations for the University. Without the resources and support from Student Life and Multicultural Affairs, our endeavors for racial healing and reconciliation would not have come to fruition.”

—Christine Phan

Baylor University 2022 | International Studies and Spanish
Department of Multicultural Affairs |
Coalition of Asian Students Intern

show. The performance served as a cultural expression intended to shine light on the experiences people of color face in society, specifically about racial justice. The viewing of the video was followed by a panel discussion by the Phi Beta Sigma chapter leadership and many of our campus experts. Although the circumstances surrounding the video brought controversy and differences of perspective, it also provided a space for rich discussion to elevate this important topic.

Interacting in a manner that is righteous, equitable, and moral in our shared campus life, extracurricular activities and experiences, and divisional education/training is a guiding principle for our Baylor family. **Throughout the course of the year, various departments, colleges, schools, and faculty/staff members collaborated in developing and deploying diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) training across campus.** Change Champions served as liaisons to their respective departments on DEIB and contributed to the development of the Division’s Caring Christian Community Plan, a DEIB Strategic Plan, along with Student Life senior leadership, directors, and staff.

The Student Life Staff Development Committee sought to provide invitational and accessible opportunities for personal and communal education and exploration around DEIB. Given the very present injustices our sisters and brothers of color experience/ed both currently and historically, and Baylor’s Resolution on Racial Healing and Justice, the committee focused the DEIB educational opportunities around specifically the Black experience in America. Monthly activities invited all members of our division to learn how systems function, understand the lives of others, and utilize tools and concepts to encourage personal and professional development. The range of programs and resources included: Racism in America: Understanding How Our Roots Inform Our Current Environment; Being Black in America: A Spotlight of Black Issues in Our Society; In Our Own Backyard: A Look into Marginalized Student Populations at Baylor; and From Theory to Practice: How to Reorient Yourself and Your Behaviors.

The Race Equity Institute’s Groundwater Workshops were also offered to focus on analyzing case studies of systemic racism by illuminating its cultural and historic roots. **More than 140 Student Life staff members attended the Groundwater Workshops. The Leave Your Mark cultural humility training was expanded to reach an unprecedented number of nearly 800 students, faculty, and staff.** The program promoted cultural humility on campus by introducing the concepts of personal identity, appreciation of differences, and understanding of microaggressions. The interactive experience engaged participants in reflection and discussion that promoted continued learning and established a foundation for relationship building to support

a diverse and inclusive campus community. Members of the Baylor community also participated in the Texas Education Consortium for Male Students of Color which featured topics such as “Breaking the Cycle: Molding Leaders of Tomorrow” and provided access to research, training, and resources in retaining and graduating male students of color.

Speaker series programs served as additional avenues to continue important cultural conversations and made significant impact across campus. More Than We Can Bear featured Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, president emerita of Spelman College. This dynamic presentation, based on her book, *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations about Race* brought together nearly 300 attendees from across the campus. The Graduate Student Association hosted Jemar Tisby (B.A. Notre Dame; MDiv RTS Jackson), President of The Witness, Black Christian Collective and author of *The Color of Compromise* and *How to Fight Racism*. **In this encore presentation from his 2019 visits to Baylor, Tisby inspired critical conversations and introspection about racial reconciliation while also empowering students to build community, break barriers, and foster inclusiveness.** The Baylor Leadership Summit featured keynote speaker, Dr. Brenda S. McNeil, Associate Professor of Reconciliation Studies at Seattle Pacific University and author of *Becoming Brave: Finding the Courage to Pursue Racial Justice Now*. Speaker series such as these challenged students to examine how they could become actively engaged in reconciliation and how to lead courageously toward building reconciling communities to be places of healing and hope.

One final significant effort was the Department of Multicultural Affairs being chosen to steward the University’s new Trailblazer Scholarship program. The University made their commitment to this new initiative known as they invested and launched the program with \$5 million in scholarship support. By February 2021, fundraising for the Trailblazer Scholars Program had surpassed an additional \$2 million. The selection of scholarship applicants was based on financial need and the demonstration of commitment to advancing racial equality, diversity, and a sense of belonging. In April 2021, the first 25 Trailblazer Scholars were announced. This inaugural cohort of Trailblazer Scholars honors Baylor’s first Black graduates, Rev. Robert Gilbert, BA ‘67, and Mrs. Barbara Walker, BA ‘67. This Gilbert-Walker Cohort will be introduced to the campus in Fall 2021. Students in the Trailblazer Scholars Program will participate in leadership and service opportunities through Baylor’s Multicultural Affairs Department and through other groups and programs on Baylor’s campus.

ADDRESSING OPERATIONAL AND STAFFING GAPS

Operating amidst a hiring freeze and with a 20% reduction in our operating budgets, our staffing models and operations required creativity and levels of collaboration not previously seen at Baylor.

Working from a strategic resource planning approach, we reviewed all existing budgetary allocations as well as discussed emerging needs within the division. We also identified one-time needs related to Covid-19 precautions and response. One of the adaptive ways we responded was the temporary reassignment of staff to areas with the greatest need due to our work to keep students, faculty, and staff healthy and safe during the pandemic. Some of the key examples of these solutions are included within this section.

Our entire Missions and Public Life Office transitioned their work and emphasis to BearAid, our on-campus support structure for students in isolation and quarantine. A system was designed for food to be delivered in timely and efficient ways to students in all of our varied locations on campus and in our designated isolation spaces at the Tru Hotel, 11th Street Flats and Arbors.

With no additional staff, we supported students with food deliveries daily, even during the threatening weather conditions of the February snowstorm, and delivered 17,352 meals. In addition to food deliveries, this team, in collaboration with Campus Living & Learning, managed laundry coordination and also mail and supply deliveries. One student even had his suit delivered to the hotel so that he could participate in the Virtual Career Day interviews. Truly, the effort was massive and our students reported feeling cared for even amidst very challenging circumstances.

During the course of the year, we found ourselves with significant staffing gaps in key areas of the campus, namely our Department of Student Activities who worked through the year with up to five vacancies at any one time. Knowing our New Student Programs team was fully staffed and also working in a different model of service-delivery due to the pandemic, **we insourced a full-time employee to work with our Fraternity and Sorority community for the entire academic year. This was so successful that at the end of the year the men of our Interfraternity Council were**

sad about the staff member's departure and tried to lobby for the transition to be permanent.

Other insourcing efforts included several of our administrative support staff serving in roles within the Contact Tracing team, sometimes giving up to 20 hours of their week to these critical efforts.

While not an example of a physical reassignment of work, the Waco Hall staff transitioned to supporting daily classes in Waco Hall from sun-up to sun-down. Often, 300 students would cycle through the Hall on the hour, socially distanced in a newly formulated classroom setting. This team became experts in turning the hall over quickly to keep students and faculty safe in this creative use of the space.

In a time of significant anxiety and stress for many of our students, we saw a dramatic increase in our case-load for Care Team Services. **With a 69% increase in cases, the Care Team augmented their efforts with a School of Social Work Intern and also leveraged technology resources to extend their reach and partnership with other campus offices.** Our Counseling Center and Health Center also did a significant amount of their work and service to students through telehealth. **The Counseling Center switched over their entire clinical system from being in-person to telehealth – and served over 1,600 students, providing almost 13,000 mental health appointments.** Our successes in this effort have led us to the adoption of an on-going telehealth strategy that will launch this fall.

Our programming repertoire also adapted to capitalize on resources and the virtual space we were working in at many points in both the fall and spring semesters. We revitalized some historic programs like This Matters where thousands of viewers heard from members of Phi Beta Sigma about their experience at Baylor, specifically about being Black men in a time of social unrest.

We also adapted Homecoming festivities to move away from our beloved parade and to incorporate a food truck event at McLane Stadium and a viewing of Pigskin review on the big screen. Finally, one of the more popular fall events came when we unfortunately had a cancelled football game. We pivoted quickly to invite

the first-year students to come and “Sign the Line” at McLane stadium. President Livingstone and the first Gent stood for hours taking socially distant photos with first year students and students had the opportunity to have the photo taken on the 50 yard-line of the field.

Turning challenges into opportunities set apart our programming across the entire year, perhaps culminating with one of the most appreciated events of the year, the Slime Cap event for our first-year students. On a beautiful April night, thousands of Class of 24 students received their coveted Slime Cap, an awesome t-shirt and also the opportunity to gather as a class.



“Hello my name is Alex Davide and I serve as Vice President of IFC. This year Baylor IFC and the Greek Community were able to accomplish many great things despite a Covid semester. Baylor IFC was still able to plan events while maintaining Covid protocols.

I specifically want to thank Vincent Phillips, our advisor. Vincent went above and beyond to be transparent and open working with us as an Executive board as well as individual chapters to ensure that information and expectations from Baylor were met while also allowing us to enjoy our Greek community to the best of our ability and voice our opinions. I can truly say Vincent empowered others and myself to be men and leaders understanding that we can make a difference in our Greek community.”

—**Alex Davide**
Baylor University Student

“To educate men and women for worldwide leadership and service by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment within a caring community.” —Baylor Mission Statement

Guided by our mission statement, Baylor occupies a truly unique place in higher education. In all that we do, Baylor strives to provide “big university opportunities with small university levels of personal relationship.” Establishing and maintaining an intentional caring community this year proved to be a unique challenge in a world defined by “social distancing.” Yet, regardless of what came our way, we stayed committed to the mission of the university and steadfast to the goal of protecting the health and well-being of our students, faculty staff and community while providing the best Baylor experience possible. And, in the end, it was by God’s grace and the work of so many that we were able to flourish even amidst a worldwide pandemic.

2020-21 BY THE NUMBERS



58%

of incoming students indicated some form of stress (New2BU)



+69%

increase in CARE Team referrals this fall with 2,692 students served



201,500

COVID-19 tests administered to students, faculty and staff

**KEEPING
THE HEALTHY
HEALTHY**

**CARING
FOR THE
SICK**

**STRENGTHENING
THE EXPERIENCE
OF NEW
BAYLOR BEARS**

**ENHANCING RACIAL
HEALING AND
UNDERSTANDING**

**ADDRESSING
OPERATIONAL AND
STAFFING GAPS**

4,093

(100%) of first-year and transfer students placed into Baylor Family Groups receiving outreach every other week and many with the opportunity to gather in groups of 10 or less. 330 upperclass student leaders involved.

3,500+

Students participated in Homecoming activities this fall

19,000+

Members of the Baylor Family viewed Christmas on 5th Street

17,352

Meals delivered by more than 50 Baylor staff and student volunteers; 75+ Division of Student Life staff insourced to provide additional support services to students

140+

SL staff participated in REI Groundwater Training

93%

Housing occupancy rate, next highest in group of comparison schools was 85% (OSU)



Baylor University

DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE

